

GREAT NEWS from LORD HOWE,

By Express, from the London Gazette.

1812

SIR ROGER CURTIS, First Captain to the Admiral Earl Howe, arrived this evening with a dispatch from his Lordship to Mr. Stephens, of which the following is a copy:—

18

SIR,

Queen Charlotte, at Sea, June 2d, 1794.

Thinking it may not be necessary to make a more particular report of my proceedings with the fleet, for the present information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, I confine my communications chiefly, in this dispatch, to the occurrences when in presence of the enemy yesterday. Finding, as we turn off Brest on the 19th inst, that the French fleet had, a few days before, put to sea; and receiving advices the same evening from Rear Admiral Montagu, I deemed it proper to endeavour to form a junction with the Rear Admiral as soon as possible, and proceeded immediately for the station on which he meant to wait for the return of the Venus. But having gained very credible intelligence on the 21st of the same month, whereby I had reason to suppose the French fleet was then but a few leagues farther to the westward, the course, before steered, was altered accordingly. On the morning of the 28th the enemy were discovered far to windward, and partial actions were engaged with them that evening and the next day. The weather-gage having been obtained in the progress of the last mentioned day, and the fleet being in a situation to bring the enemy to close action on the 1st instant, the ships bore up together for that purpose between seven and eight o'clock in the morning.

The French, their force consisting of twenty-six ships of the line, opposed to His Majesty's fleet of twenty-five, (the Audacious having parted company with the sternmost ship of the enemy's line, captured in the night of the 28th) waited for the action, and sustained the action with their customary resolution. In less than an hour after the close action commenced in the centre, the French Admiral, engaged by the Queen Charlotte, crowded off, and was followed by most of the ships of his Van in condition to follow him, leaving with us about ten or twelve of his crippled or totally dismasted ships, exclusive of one sunk in the engagement. The Queen Charlotte had then lost her fore topmast, and the main topmast fell over the side very soon after. The greater number of the other ships of the British fleet were, at this time, so much disabled or widely separated, and under such circumstances with respect to those ships of the enemy in a state for action, and with which the firing was still continued, that two or three, even of their dismantled ships, attempting to get away under a spritsail singly, or smaller sail raised on the stump of the foremast, could not be detained. Seven remained in our possession, one of which, however, sunk before the adequate assistance could be given to her crew, but many were saved.

The Brunswick, having lost her Mizzen mast in the Action, and drifted to Leeward of the French retreating ships, was obliged to put away to the Northward from them. Not seeing her chased by the enemy, in that predicament, I flatter myself she may arrive in safety at Plymouth.

I have not been able to collect regular Accounts of the Killed and Wounded in the different Ships. Captain Montagu is the only officer of his Rank who fell in the Action. The Numbers of both Descriptions I hope will prove small, the nature of the Service considered; but have the concern of being to add, on the same Subject, that Admiral Greaves has received a wound in the arm, and that Rear Admirals Bowyer and Bailey, and Captain Hutt of the Queen, have each a leg taken off; they are, however, (I have the satisfaction to hear) in a favourable state under those misfortunes. In the captured ships the numbers of the killed and wounded appear to be very considerable.

I am &c.

H O W E.

P. S. The names and force of the captured French ships with the Fleet is transmitted herewith.

La Juste	—	—	—	—	—	80 Guns.
Sans Pareille	—	—	—	—	—	80
L'America	—	—	—	—	—	74
L'Achille	—	—	—	—	—	74
Northumberland	—	—	—	—	—	74
L'Impetueux	—	—	—	—	—	74
Vengeur	—	—	—	—	—	74, sunk almost

immediately upon being taken possession of.

N. B. The ship stated to have been captured on the evening of the 28th of last month, is said by the prisoners to be the Revolutionaire, of 140.

